



Present: Dwight Baker; Laila Barr; Dan Chavre; Ray Day, Jr.; Dave Elliott; Miranda Leidich, chair; Joan Michaels; Ed Miller; vice-chair; Anirudh Sahni; Carla Saulter; Tina Shereen; Roger Thordarson

Staff: Barbara de Michele, Community Relations Planner; David Hull, Supervisor of Service Planning

Leidich opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m. De Michele announced that Sharron Shinbo, who was scheduled to give a report on proposed tunnel advertising, was ill and would re-schedule her report for the October meeting.

Appreciation of Service

Members honored the service of Anirudh Sahni and Dwight Baker, both completing their second terms on the Transit Advisory Committee. De Michele presented both with certificates of appreciation from Metro management, and the group enjoyed cake and refreshments. Sahni and Baker both expressed their appreciation for the group and said they would very much miss the meetings and the fellowship.

Approaches to Metro's Financial Challenges

Following up on his August TAC report, David Hull reiterated Metro's financial challenges. A combination of high gas prices and reduced sales tax revenue has left Metro in a difficult position. In addition, Metro is facing a 6% employee COLA increase this year. Combined, these trends have put Metro approximately \$90 million short for fiscal year 2008-2009. The trend continues, with the agency projecting a \$70 million shortfall in 2010 and every year thereafter.

Hull outlined several possible solutions. These include: 1) raising revenues through a fare increase or additional advertising opportunities (Metro is unable to raise additional taxes, having reached the legal taxing ceiling); 2) reducing expenses, such as deferred maintenance or administrative reductions; 3) reducing capital spending, including some significant projects that could be put on hold; 4) reducing cash reserves; and 5) seeking external relief, such as help from the state legislature. Hull explained each option in depth, including the tradeoffs involved with each one. General Manager Kevin Desmond will make a presentation to the Regional Transit Committee on September 17 outlining potential solutions for council action.

Committee Business

- Dave Elliott was elected vice-chair, to serve as chair in January, February and March.
- De Michele said that five individuals have been selected as possible candidates for the TAC. She is currently working with Council staff to get approval for all five.
- Thordarson moved/Day seconded that the November meeting be moved from November 11 (Veterans Day) to November 18. Passed unanimously.

- Day reported on the first meeting of the South East Transit Connections Sounding Board. Miller is representing the TAC on the South Seattle TCSB and Barr will be representing TAC on the Ballard-Uptown RapidRide Advisory Panel, which will commence in October.

Committee Discussion

De Michele reported that Leidich had asked her to look into the possibility of the TAC writing an op-ed piece. De Michele had done so, checking with the KCDOT public affairs office, and been given a green light. Members therefore discussed possible topics and suggested:

- Creating a solid funding base for Metro
- Educating the public on how transit is funded
- The importance of public safety and security
- Necessary improvements to the website
- Drawing attention to this group – be sure to weave that information into the piece
- Why Metro needs marketing as a core function
- The need for Metro to get more revenue from advertising – tunnel ads, shelter ads
- Support for Proposition I
- A detailed response/explanation to Ron Sims' proposal to sell property
- Focus on funding issues
- Metro's funding source is unstable – the legislature needs to fix it.

Since the possibility of a TAC position on Sound Transit's Proposition I had been suggested, De Michele said she would check with King County ethics office to determine if it was legal or ethical for the TAC to take a position on a ballot issue.

Saulter moved; Miller seconded that the TAC authorize an op-ed subcommittee to draft a piece for consideration at the October meeting. Passed unanimously. Shereen, Day, and Leidich volunteered to serve on the sub-committee. Sahni will participate until the end of his term on September 30.

Leidich adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.